



Education Watch

Enhancing Flexibility & Accountability ■ Leaving No Child Behind

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GOP Education Leaders Continue Pushing for New Flexibility

As the House-Senate education conference nears completion of a final agreement on H.R. 1, Republican conferees are standing firm in their efforts to ensure that the final bill provides new flexibility for both local school districts and states in the use of federal education funds.

What does “flexibility” mean? In a nutshell, it means ensuring that states and schools aren't asked to meet higher expectations with their hands tied behind their backs by counterproductive federal rules. It means continuing the flow of federal education funds to states and local schools, while giving them more freedom to decide how those funds should be used to help students. It means reshaping federal education rules to reflect the fact that students in different places have different needs.

Flexibility goes hand in hand with the President's call for greater accountability. States using federal education resources will be held accountable for improving student achievement. In return, the federal government must provide states and local schools with more freedom to meet higher expectations.

Without relief from restrictive federal rules and red tape, America's public education system will never achieve the level of excellence it is capable of achieving. By providing greater flexibility at the state and local levels, the true potential of our nation's education system can be tapped and harnessed for the benefit of America's children.

Message of the Day

New flexibility is one of the pillars of President Bush's vision for education reform.

- ❑ *Education leaders should not be asked to meet higher expectations with their hands tied behind their backs.*
- ❑ *Local leaders know the unique needs and priorities of their students, and can make better decisions with federal education dollars than Washington bureaucrats can.*
- ❑ *Congress will send a final education bill to the President this year that expands flexibility for both states and local school districts.*

DAILY EDUCATION FACTS

- H.R. 1, passed by the House in May, would provide immediate new flexibility for every local school district in America, allowing school districts to use up to 50 percent of their non-Title I federal funds as they see fit among a long list of allowable uses.
- H.R. 1 would also establish a demonstration project giving 100 local school districts (two per state) near-total relief from federal rules and requirements in exchange for better results.
- S. 1, passed by the Senate in June, would provide new flexibility for 25 local school districts and seven states.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

“By strong, bipartisan votes, the House and Senate have called for greater accountability from states in raising student performance. We want to ensure that states and local school districts are given greater flexibility to meet those higher expectations.” -- Rep. John Boehner (R-OH), chairman of the House-Senate conference on education reform, in remarks Tuesday night to conferees (October 30, 2001).